

THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

VOL. VI.]

PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 1, 1825.

[No. 66.]

DARK ASPECT AT THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

Mr. Richards, one of the missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, writes thus:—

“Three months ago, Mrs. Richards and I were alone, our associates being called to Oahu. The chiefs being absent, the common people were bold in insulting us. At one time there were twenty men around our yard, calling us liars, thieves, &c. threatening also to burn our houses; at night hundreds of men and women were assembled at but little distance from our yard, for no other purpose than that of iniquity; and many of those on whom our hopes had been placed, were almost dead with intoxication.

“Five weeks ago, the war commenced at Tauwai. Then the people gave themselves up anew to all manner of iniquity. After a short time things became regular again; so that our schools were never more prosperous than they were two weeks ago. A day was set apart for fasting and prayer on account of the war, and the general aspect of things was more favourable than it had been at any previous period. But notwithstanding all these promising appearances, the last five days have been black indeed;—probably more than one half of all the people in Lahaina have been making an excessive use of intoxicating drink. Every day there has been a circle in sight of our door, consisting probably of from one to two thousand persons, whose whole object is fighting; and *fighting enough they have had*. One of the chiefs proposes to go to another part of the island and sacrifice to the old gods; and when I began my letter,

there was scarce a ray of light shining around us. But while I have been writing a herald has been crying through the town, ‘all fighting is forbidden, all intoxication, and all adultery; whoever breaks this prohibition, shall pay four hundred dollars.’ This herald was sent by the governess of the island, and there probably for a time will be no open breaches of the laws. The governess has formerly been less favourable to the mission than most other chiefs; but the people had gone so far that even she could not bear it. She has even laid a positive prohibition on the chief who proposed to sacrifice. Some such changes as these have been taking place almost every month since we arrived here. We have learned, therefore, to be neither very much encouraged, or depressed, by the appearances of a day.”

[From the Christian Baptist.]

In many towns and neighbourhoods in this Western World, it becomes necessary, in order to success in any business or profession, that a person profess some sectarian creed. In some places, it is true, there is a majority of non-professors—among these a man without a creed may succeed. These situations are, however, comparatively few, and still becoming fewer. The only chance of success, in most places, for a non-professor of a sectarian creed, (and there are many who seem to understand it) is, to pay a tribute of respect, or a tribute of money, to the more powerful or more popular creed in his vicinity. Next to this, it behooves him to speak “charitably” of all. But woe awaits him who has so little policy as to profess no creed, and at the same

time to speak disrespectfully of any or of all. William Pedibus, the shoemaker, lost the custom of all the Presbyterians in town, because he said that Parson Trim denied free agency. And Thomas Vulcanus, the blacksmith, never shod a Methodist's horse since the time he censured Elder Vox's sermon on the possibility of falling from grace. John Paidogogus, the free-thinker, though an excellent teacher, lost the school of the village Romance, because his competitor, though of limited acquisitions and less talents, could say shiboleth.

The Editor of the Times failed to continue his paper, more than six months, in the county of Knox, because of his editorial remarks on the avarice of a clergyman in his neighbourhood, who sued at law, through the trustees of his congregation, three widows and four paupers, for seven and six pence a piece. Having failed, and made his hegira to the county of Hopkins, he commenced with some encomiums on a sermon of the Rev. Bene Placit; his subscription list was speedily and greatly enlarged, and by frequenting three meeting-houses in town, in due succession, and by giving a little stipend to the three parsons in town, he has got rich by his editorial labours. Joannes Baptistus lost an election to congress because his rival, John Melancthon, was taken up by two Congregational ministers. And the time was, in Western Pennsylvania, when the candidate taken up by the Presbyterian congregations, was carried over all opposition from superior talents, erudition and fidelity. But since the father of the Western Presbyterians failed to elect a governor for Pennsylvania by a single letter of commendation, the Congregational ticket scheme has been completely dropped.

In the late agonizing struggle for President, it was alleged by some that the wife of Gen. Jackson was a pious Presbyterian, and some were so bold as

to say that the General himself either was, or was about to be a *ruling elder*. Mr. Adams, too, was a Congregational saint, as his friends said; but Messrs. Crawford and Clay were neither sanctified themselves, nor by their wives; and see how far they were behind. In fine, the sectarian creeds, according to their popularity, less or more, fill the chairs in the legislative halls of the states, and even threaten the seat of the chief magistrate of the United States. Synods, too, like the first Popes, have actually passed resolutions approbatory of the measures of government; thereby showing the right, and reserving the power, to pass resolutions disapprobatory of the proceedings of government, when either their temper or the times require it. Indeed, sectarian pride, ambition, and avarice threaten, evidently threaten, the continuance of our present free and beneficent institutions.

But this is not all. Modern sectaries are so consolidating their energies and their influence, that in many of our towns and neighbourhoods, when a young man gets himself a wife, he must either join some sect, or, at least, support one, if he intends to have bread and butter. Thus inducements are presented to hypocrisy, and men are forced into a profession which neither their judgment nor their inclination prompts them to, but which becomes necessary to success in their calling.

The clergy have ever been the greatest tyrants in every state—and at present they are, in every country in Europe, on the side of the oppressors of the people who trample on the rights of men. Nor are we to suppose that this is an accidental, but an essential characteristic of their assumptions. It is neither the air which they inhale, nor the soil on which they are supported, nor the government under which they live; but the spirit of their pretensions, which generates the hauteur, the ambition, and the love of sway, so generally conspicuous in their character. We

know that there are some exceptions—but these only occur where the spirit of the man preponderates over the spirit of the system. It is by no means a marvellous thing to find individuals among the clergy exhibiting traits of character very opposite to the distinguishing features of the priesthood. While we cheerfully discriminate, let us cautiously, and with a jealous eye, observe their manœuvres as a fraternity ever to be feared, but never to be trusted, especially as respects the affairs of this present world.

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For the Reformer.

UNION COLLEGE, May, 1824.

To the Editor of the Reformer.—The encroachments of the clergy upon the rights of the people are so continued and various, that it should be considered the duty of every one to expose whatever pertaining to them may happen to fall under his observation. Impressed with a sense of this, I cannot refrain from giving a few observations respecting the extreme solicitude of the clergy to control the education and form the minds of the rising generation. The reason of this must be imputed to their desire of acquiring and maintaining an influence entirely incompatible with the genius of our government. While they held the people in utter ignorance during the dark ages, they easily arrived at and maintained that ascendancy which seems to be the constant object of their ambition. Science, the spread of which could not be stopped by bigotry or fanaticism, once more revived, and the Papal throne was shaken to its foundation. The Romish church fell, and with it those seminaries of monkish idleness and corruption which had preyed upon the very vitals of community. No longer able to impose upon the ignorance of the multitude by arts and devices so barefaced and so repugnant to every thing bearing the stamp of honesty, they must needs resort to other means for the sake of perpetua-

ting their influence. Ever fruitful however in expedients, instead of endeavouring to obstruct the progress of learning, they are now trying to make it subserve their ambition: having the self same end in view with their predecessors, they are striving to make use of that very instrument which once well nigh destroyed their power. The truth of this observation is fully exemplified by the bold and daring efforts which they have been and are now making in the State of New York. Their connexion with the Secretary of the School Fund, and their efforts in the Legislature, have already been noticed by the friends of freedom in a suitable manner. They are, however, busy in another department which perhaps should demand quite as much vigilance. I refer to the zealous efforts which have been lately made and are now making, to bring about a *reform* in colleges. By this we are to understand that the students are not to be reclaimed from any vicious habits they have contracted, but merely converted to the doctrine of priestcraft, so as to enter deeply into their views.

The influence of liberally educated men in society is well known to be very considerable. They are generally considered, and perhaps justly, as men who, from their talents, opportunities, and acquirements, are better fitted to transact the more intricate and weighty affairs of social life. To gain over such men to the views of the priesthood must be to them an object of great importance. They are perfectly aware of this. They are aware that such men enlisted under their banners, will better enable them to extend their influence through every grade of society. They are aware that it will be the means of extending and giving permanence to an aristocracy as repugnant to civil freedom as it is necessary to their elevation.

In perfect accordance with these views, therefore, were their efforts at Hamilton College during the last fall

term. These efforts, if we may credit the Boston Recorder, were attended with partial success in the conversion of many of the students. It was from that dull and servile print that I chanced to learn a few particulars concerning this unpropitious scene. I have now to regret that that paper is not before me. It is perhaps sufficient, however, to remember that the President himself visited each individual student, and made efforts far beyond the propriety of his official station, and inconsistent with those unbiassed religious sentiments which every student ought to enjoy. This serves to show how extremely anxious they are to bring about this *reformation* at the fountain head of literature, that their principles may have an extensive and permanent influence.

Immediately in connexion with this addition to the pitiful subjects of priestcraft in Hamilton College, were the zealous efforts which were made in this college during nearly all of last term. Indeed, to speak without exaggeration, every nerve was stretched and all the powers of persuasion exhausted to induce the students to "come over to the Lord's side;" that is, to become the instruments of clerical ambition. Frequent meetings were held, lectures were given, and *long prayers* were made; but all to little purpose. We could exclaim with Horace, "*Parturiunt montes nascitur ridiculus mus:*" *the mountains laboured and a mouse was born.* One, and one only, as I can hear, was withered beneath the fiery bolts of clerical fulminations; and his chief merit seems to consist in a disposition to remain *passive* and *obedient* under the instructions of his sage conscience keepers.

One of the most serious objections which can probably be made against the existence of colleges, is, that they should become instruments in the hands of the clergy. To deprive the people in general of the means of obtaining a common education, is to be sure be-

yond their power: but could they once obtain that influence in colleges which they so ardently desire, it would need but a few steps more to the establishment of a national hierarchy; an event which we have every reason to suppose is looked for by them with much impatience. No event can sooner hasten the downfall of American freedom than the *union* of Church and State; nor can any thing more effectually operate to produce such an event, than that the clergy should engross the principal sources of literary improvement. In such an issue, their superiority in point of literary acquirements would give them an alarming preponderance in all the affairs of civilized society. The minds of men (like silly women now) would be easily swayed by their advice and remonstrances. Men favourable to their views would easily find political preferment, and the Halls of our Legislature would exhibit *secret* conclaves of the enemies of liberal principles and rational freedom. A JUNIOR.*

[The force of the foregoing communication will be better perceived when taken in connexion with the following declaration of a Doctor of Divinity at an Association of Clergymen, held in Thetford, Vermont:—"When all our *colleges* are under our influence, it will establish our sentiments and influence, so that *we can manage the civil government as we please.*" See Ignatius Thomson's Letters in the Reformer for November, 1820.]

[From the American Eagle.]

Third Missionary visit of Lucifer to the Pope of Rome.

DEVIL—Well Pontiff, I have come to read my grand essay.

[Then reads Lyman Beecher's Address for the Education of indigent pious young men for the Ministry.]

POPE—And what is there, more than in those my missionaries sent me before your last visit?

DEVIL—To the 13th page and the

* "*A Junior*" is requested to continue his correspondence.

God of Jacob but once named! A new idol created—a college education—a learned priesthood made the cap and corner stone of Christ's church, the one thing needful in his ministry! A bold, direct appeal to *wealth* to save souls from hell! See ye not the point, the plot and bearing of the whole! Those you had were but the fruit of this. This is the root—the plant that bore them.

This Address, Sir, was at once the most barren of gospel truth, the most luxuriant in religious falsehood, of any thing in the name of the gospel, then published in America. Paine's work, which I armed to fight Christ and the Bible in open warfare, fell harmless to the ground. My infidel works in the name of Voltaire, Volney, and others, had in France produced me a plentiful harvest, but had re-acted upon me in America. A *masked battery* had there become essential. The missionary funding system was contrived, and was indeed progressing, before this, my master piece was published—and this I clothed in the mantle of the gospel, to undermine the churches I had in open warfare before in vain assailed. And since your Holy See swallowed up all the churches planted by the Apostles, except that at Milan, which fled to Piedmont, afterwards called the Waldense churches, till the year 1814, I had never dared to broach such doctrines in the churches, as this my tract contained. You must know Sir that—

POPE—Who wrote it?

DEVIL—I can't Sir be interrupted with such trifling questions. No matter. The one whose name it bears, has borne the curses of those on whom it trod. But to proceed,—Christ, the founder, is not more essential to the Christian system, than is HUMILITY to the Christian, and the Christian church. This may destroy the hopes of *Popes*, and *Kings*, and *titled priests*, and millions more! but mark my words—without it I will have their souls! And I myself, hurled headlong from heaven for

the want of that humility, am not a greater foe to Christ, than some of the principles advanced in this Address are to His church militant on earth.

Methodist and Baptist ministers and elders had long scoured and patrolled the cities and the towns—passed the hither and the farther mountains, and ranged the new settled deserts in search after souls—in low temples, in log cabins, under trees and in tents, preaching faith and repentance, and the necessity of the new creature, not in the rhetoric of the schools, but Jesus, and him crucified. They had as much of what the world calls *learning*, as had the 12 or the 70 Apostles, when sent out to preach. They had been tillers of land and workers in wood, and the Apostles had been fishermen. The Apostles were taught by the lips of the Saviour, they by His revealed word. Each, the one by His lips, the other by His word, had been taught, as they believed, His new commandments,—the belief and obedience of which, are the sum total of religion. If learning they had, they used it—if learning they had not, they believed it not essential for the foundation of Christ's kingdom, nor a liberally educated priesthood to be of God's appointment, or essential to His churches.

All these humble doctrines, in these churches, and so much of them as remained in the Presbyterian or Episcopal churches, it was of momentous consequence to my kingdom, that I should, as far as possible, at a single stroke destroy. It was indeed a bold adventure; but the pill was rolled deep in pride, and swallowed quickly by the pilgrim churches—but was combustion arrows and fire-brands to Methodists and Baptists. From pulpit and from press, anathemas "loud and long," were rung! while I, in Stygian style, lay skulking to enjoy the scene.

At length, into the ear of many leaders of their clergy, I whispered thus,—“You do right to beat and bruise this Dr. Beecher, and these

Presbyterians; they are a proud, imperious, and ambitious host, and well deserve this castigation: but hark ye, they are getting all the cash, and educating troops of priests; they will soon outnumber and overpower you—*money is power, and so is education*: you must have colleges, education societies, learned priests, Doctors of Divinity, funds of wealth—and, like their clergy, get all the laity to giving, or down you go!" At length they lent a listening ear. The Baptists first. And then new sport for me, and I suspect new griefs for heaven, began; for now *pell yell* for FUNDS, the Baptists followed after Presbyterians: and anon, *yell pell* for FUNDS, the Methodists after them! and in the Middle States, Episcopalians, helter-skelter, followed after!

Could I, or my compeer king, old Mammon, enjoy a greater triumph over the cross of Christ than this! Soon Baptist clergy, new made Doctors, became more proud than Presbyterians; and in all that I or Mammon could suggest as means of getting cash, they even took the lead. It was Baptist Doctors, Stoughton standing pre-eminent among the rest, who at their new college in the capital of that empire, and from their college presses in that fair land of promise, first proclaimed "the river of God," in dollars, as your predecessors called their gold and silver coffers "the sacred treasure of the Lord." Nay, so flaming and so rampant did I make them, as to seize "God wills it," that motto of the Christless crusades, for their motto! And not long since, some of the Methodist divines heaped more malignant curses on those opposing these new schemes, than they did once upon that "chairman," "done by order," who had torn off their priestly mantle, and unhoused them from the house of God. And not long since, *one hundred* of the so lately meek itinerants for Christ, I assembled in one group, to pompously receive an offering to their new idol—*A bag of dollars*, and as a *sacrifice*! and

from a child but *twelve years old*! a trophy in their grasp for funds.

Head of the Roman Church! did angels ever weep, and not at this? See ye not then, that every seed I scattered in five thousand Tracts of that Address, have taken root, and borne me fruit a hundred fold? Even the little urchins, the young and rising race in that great land of promise, are taught the use of CASH AS MEANS OF GRACE. That their Saviour will them love as they their money give to funds, and hate them as they do withhold. In ten years training, since this Address, I have so trained them, that of half their women, every woman is an EVE; and of half their clergy, every minister to her "the Tempter" is.

In short, the greatest effort and emulation seems now to be, which most shall sacrifice to their new lord and master Mammon, and scrape together the greatest piles of gold and wealth for their new god of missions.

I tell you not that Christ has now no church *militant* in all that land; but this I do well know, that my church *moneytant* is deeply planted there, and bearing thick its plenteous fruit for hell. And all the leading doctrines of this my new church *moneytant*, in this Address, were all embodied. The peals of joy among my fallen fiends were "long and loud," when it was given out; and Jesus never wept, if then He did not weep.

[*Exit Devil.*]

The Pope then complains to his Cardinals of the treatment of these Pilgrim Puritanic Doctors abusing the Popes of Rome as the "Man of Sin," and then following precisely in their footsteps in the *means* of getting funds, all except the sale of Indulgences—to which he seemed to think they would soon come. And acknowledged to his Cardinals, that if they did set up *popery* for themselves in New England, this Dr. — would be better entitled to the *tiara* than Dr. Porter.

BLESSINGS OF A RELIGIOUS
ESTABLISHMENT.

[From a London paper of March 19.]

Mansion House.—On Friday the Tithe Collector for the Rev. Dr. Wilson, Rector of St. Mary, Aidemary, one of the parishes in which the impropiators consider themselves entitled under the 37th Henry VIII. to levy the sum of 2s 9d. in the pound upon the parishioners, appeared against a poor widow named Elizabeth Toolet, who resides at No. 16, Bow-lane.

The Collector said he had been instructed by the Doctor to summon the defendant before his Lordship, in consequence of the non-payment of tithes amounting to 1l. 8s. No statement was made as to the rate of the demand—but the Collector expressed his regret at being obliged to call upon a poor widow, whom he found was not in attendance, notwithstanding the extremity to which she might be reduced by her disobedience of the order.

The Lord Mayor—There is no man who can be more anxious than I am to see the Clergy liberally recompensed for their labours. But I never can sanction an application for tithe where there is nothing but poverty to be seen. Is the defendant unable to pay?

Collector—I am convinced of it, my Lord. She is, I am sure, in a state of the greatest distress. Indeed I wish she had come here in obedience to the summons, for her appearance would say more for her than I can. It would have excited the deepest compassion.

Mr. Hobler said the late Lord Mayor had been applied to by the Rev. Doctor to compel the unfortunate defendant (who, if he was not mistaken, had two children) to pay tithe. He also believed that the predecessor of Alderman Waithman had been requested to do a similar thing for the Doctor, and that neither of the applications succeeded. Alderman Waithman, he knew, sent a recommendation, with his compliments, not to press the demand.—Perhaps his Lordship would, under the

circumstances, think proper to send a similar recommendation.

The Lord Mayor—I certainly think it my duty to request that this poor woman may not be compelled to pay what has been demanded. It would be an act of great cruelty to press the tithe. You say, Sir, (to the Collector) that you believe she is not able to pay?

Collector—Indeed, my Lord, I consider her as quite destitute of means. Her husband, who was a hair-dresser, died in the depth of her distress, and she is not better in her circumstances than when he was alive. I shall take your Lordship's recommendation to the Doctor with great pleasure.

The Lord Mayor—Pray, is not the Doctor secretary to the Society for the propagation of the Gospel?

The Collector answered in the affirmative.

The Lord Mayor—Then tell him that I am firmly of opinion that it is not an act of Christian charity to persist in his demand upon the poor widow. Tell him also that if he is unwilling to give it up, I will divide an act of charity with him, and pay him ten shillings in the pound for the tithe.

The Collector expressed his readiness to communicate his Lordship's proposal, and took his leave.

Some bystanders observed, that if the Clergy did not mind what they were about, they would upset the tithes altogether.

On Thursday, Mr. Lyon, the Collector, waited upon the Lord Mayor on the subject of the demand made upon the poor widow, named Toolet, whom the Rev. Doctor ordered to be summoned for the non-payment of 1l. 8s. to which he is entitled as one of the Fire Act Clergy.* The following took place:

Mr. Lyon—My Lord, I mentioned your recommendation to Dr. Wilson not to enforce the payment of the

* For a more full account of these *Fire Act Clergy*, see the Reformer, vol. v. page 197.—[Ed. Reformer.]

tithes upon the defendant, on account of her extreme poverty.

The Lord Mayor—And I trust he has consented to waive his claim.

Mr. Lyon—I regret to say, my Lord, that he insists on the whole amount.—Upon being told your Lordship's opinion upon the case, he said you had no right to dictate upon, or to interfere with, his private acts of charity, which were considerable.

The Lord Mayor—I never dictated, as you are perfectly well aware. I know that his claim to his tithes are indisputable—that it is as strong as that of a landlord to his land.* I merely recommended that the Doctor should give up his claim in part or in toto. I have now only to regret that he has not viewed the case, which is certainly one, by your account, of great necessity, in the same light; and I can not help expressing my disappointment at his determination to enforce payment.

Mr. Lyon—I represented the poverty of the defendant to the Doctor in the strongest terms of which I was capable, and I mentioned your Lordship's proposition to divide the demand with him,—but all I could say was of no avail. So far from being prevailed upon to give up a half-penny of the tithe, he directed me to apply to your Lordship for a warrant of distress upon her goods and chattels.

The Lord Mayor expressed some surprise, and (we believe) indignation at this demand. He asked the Collector whether there was any reason to doubt the veracity of the defendant's statement of her inabilities to pay the amount.

Mr. Lyon said he had no more doubt of it than of his own existence,—and that it might be seen he did not exaggerate, he had called upon the defendant and requested her to attend at

the Justice Room and mention the particulars of her situation.

The defendant, whose appearance was quite confirmatory of the account given by Mr. Lyon, then made the following statement in answer to the questions put to her by the Lord Mayor.

Her husband died about six months ago, after a long and severe illness, which confined him and prevented him from attending to his business (which was that of a hair-dresser) for twelve months. During his illness she found it a matter of great difficulty to supply him with what was necessary. She had two children, the one six, and the other eight years of age; and she kept life in them by the miserable profits of the shop, to attend the business of which she was obliged to pay a man. So far from being able to put by any of those profits to pay the Clergyman, whose right to the tithe she never questioned, she was obliged to apply the pence as they came in to the purchase of the necessaries of life. It was well known to all the neighbourhood that she was in this extreme state of poverty. The Doctor had been kind enough, through the intercession of Alderman Waithman and Mr. Lyon, to reduce his claim, and she had paid the reduced demand, but had not now a half-penny, nor had she any expectation of ever being able to discharge the Doctor's claim. In fact she found it so difficult to get up the rent of 10*l.* a year, and the taxes, that she was afraid she should be obliged to give up the house altogether.

Mr. Lyon told the Lord Mayor that the parish were so well convinced of the defendant's poverty, that they resolved not to apply to her for any poors' rates.

The Lord Mayor—"The Doctor knew nothing of that act of the parish?"

Mr. Lyon said the argument had not been forgotten in the endeavour to prevail upon the Doctor to alter his

* This is a greater degree of condescension and courtesy to an avaricious priest than facts will warrant, or the New Testament justify.—[*Ed. Reformer.*]

determination; but the Doctor was not to be influenced by the conduct of his parishioners, and had directed that the final measure should be adopted.—“But,” said Mr. Lyon, “I shall never put a warrant of distress in execution against the poor woman.”

The Lord Mayor—Perhaps Doctor Wilson has many parishioners from whom he finds it difficult to obtain his tithe, and is anxious to have their places supplied by persons who are able and disposed to pay. Every labourer is worthy of his hire; and if the Doctor were to meet with many in the condition of the defendant, from what source is he to derive the means of existence? I suppose, Mr. Lyon, you have several on your books who plead their indigence.

Mr. Lyon—I am not aware of one, my Lord, except this poor woman.

The Lord Mayor—Indeed! Without attempting to deny the right of Doctor Wilson to enforce the payment of the tithe, I must say that it would have been charitable in him to forego the claim in this case of real necessity. No man can be more anxious than I am to see the Clergy liberally remunerated for the performance of their duties; and it can be no reflection upon that respectable body to say, that the refusal of the Doctor to remit his tithe, when the parish have remitted their rate, is no strong evidence of his superiority to those who have not such frequent opportunities of consulting the great authority for acts of virtue.

Harrison, the Marshalman, said that when he, on a former occasion, went to serve a summons upon the defendant, he did not think of taking his fee from such an object.

Mr. Oldham, who was in the Justice Room during this scene, expressed a wish that the Lord Mayor and he should pay the sum demanded—but

The Lord Mayor said he should save himself the pain of signing a warrant of distress by paying the whole amount himself. His Lordship ac-

cordingly handed over 1*l.* 8*s.* to the Collector, who, we thought, received it very reluctantly.

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For the Reformer.

[Communicated from Portland, Maine.]

Mr. Editor,—Having read with a degree of interest your very useful publication, I take the liberty to intrude the following brief remarks upon your notice.

Some three or four years ago, the “*Methodist Episcopal Church*” in this town, having grown proud, and wishing to become like the neighbouring congregations of other sects, formed a plan for making *pews* in their meeting house. They urged as a reason for so doing, that the money which they should receive from the sale and rent of pews would pay their expenses, and they should thereby be freed from the *disagreeable* necessity of carrying the contribution box round every Sunday.

When they had finished their pews, they must be painted, as well as the outside of the house—a porch must be built—new cushions procured for the pulpit—new curtains for the windows, and yet something was lacking. Carpets and cushions must be provided for the pews, or nobody will hire them.

After all these things were finished, money was still wanting—the “contribution box” was pushed in the faces of the audience once, twice, and in some cases, three times on Sundays. Contributions taken in class meetings and prayer meetings—*charity* sermons preached—and begging from the pulpit became common. Individuals not belonging to the society, who attended their meetings, were willing and frequently solicited to assist in making up the quarterage, which usually falls short from 25 to 30 dollars. I beheld the evils which had crept in among this people with regret, and waited with anxious expectation to witness the final issue, which was consummated by learning the result of a meeting, which was held last Wednesday

evening by the male members of the church and congregation, to devise some means to raise money to defray the expenses of the church. This meeting was notified from the pulpit on Sunday preceding, as a meeting to transact business which was of importance to all. Before the meeting took place, the members of the church were frequently solicited to disclose its object, or what business they were going to transact. This they refused to do, declaring their ignorance—therefore, those of the congregation who were not members of the society, went there entirely ignorant of what was to be done, and unprepared to do any thing.

After the meeting was duly organized, its object stated, &c. the *Reverend Divine*, who is stationed here, gave a long extemporaneous address, in which he stated, “by uniting the church and congregation, [those in the habit of attending the meeting but not members] reciprocal feelings would be established; the congregation would feel more interested in the support of the gospel, and would be likely to contribute more freely toward defraying the church expenses, than they had done heretofore.”

It was then proposed that this Reverend and two others should form a constitution, which should be signed by all who were willing to contribute to the support of the church—and the sums they were willing to give at the end of each quarter, should be affixed to their names. It was stated, that by signing this no one would bind himself to pay more than at the present time: but I regarded this as a mere hoax, in order to get more names and more amount subscribed. They are an incorporated society, and if I obligate myself to pay them one dollar every three months, without limitation, they will have as much authority to compel me to pay it 50 years hence as now.

The society was at length formed, under the name and style of “*the Portland Methodist Finance Society*.” A

local *minister* was elected President, and Mr. —, Secretary. As to this latter young man I would just remark, that in his general character he is upright and honest, but he is a lover of social amusement—is frequently found the inmate of ball rooms, theatres, &c. and if one has any right to judge of his religious ideas from his conversation, I should regard his principles as being more proper for an adherent of the doctrine of *Thomas Paine*, than of an associate of a Methodist minister.

A committee of ten were appointed to solicit the assistance of those who were not present.

It appears from the present flourishing condition of the society, that this church, in future, will not want for the “*root of all evil*.” Nay, I predict that they will “have goats’ milk enough for themselves and their household.”

As this society has now pushed itself into existence, our burden, in future, will be greatly increased. We who usually attend the Methodist meeting, have to pay for a place to sit in to hear the principles of their society expounded—and after hearing, have a “contribution box” pushed in our faces, which is as much as to say, “we have imparted to you our spiritual things, and now you ought to give us of your carnal things.” Besides all this, we are called upon every three months to assist in making up “the arrearage.”

H.

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For the Reformer.

The *Rev. Dr. Gardner Spring* has lately printed and published a sermon to the *females* of New York, and particularly to those of his congregation who had advanced the cash to make him *life member* of many societies.—Among other things treated on in this celebrated sermon, he touches the very interesting subject (to fine ladies) of dress, and quotes Prov. xxxi. 22, in favour of dressing fine, ending his rounded period thus—“But the Holy Spirit of God has said, [of the good

wife] She is clothed with *silk* and *scarlet*." Now, the SEVENTY, who certainly understood the language of the author better than our Doctor, say, (as rendered into English by Thompson) "She made for her husband double garments; and for herself robes of *cotton* and *purple*." But allowing his assertion to have been correct, he should have known that this case of the virtuous woman, was during the old, or law dispensation, and where the glaring colours of scarlet was appointed to the use of the tabernacle, &c. but, I think, is only mentioned in the New Testament as the colour worn by "mystery Babylon," Rev. xvii. 4. 'Tis by means of such teachers that "silly women are led astray." I was told that a fashionable lady, who had laid by her grand head and body dresses, having been presented with this sermon, soon resumed her top-knots, shawls, and trinkets, to the great joy of the half-witted family. H. I.

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For the Reformer.

ANOTHER CAT OUT OF THE BAG.

The following extract shows that the clergy have invented, at least, one other way of securing to themselves the "mammon of this world," besides that of demanding wages for preaching, (as they call it) praying, &c. in public. It is to be hoped that the disclosure of this secret item of their vast revenues, will furnish a clue to detect more of the *sacra privata*'s of clerical speculators in the public funds.

"By the laws of Connecticut, *ecclesiastical bodies* having funds, are entitled to vest them in bank stock of the banks, at par, as additional to the nominal capital, and to draw their dividends equally with the other stockholders, until they may think proper to withdraw those funds from the capital stock. These are termed 'privileged subscriptions.'"

[Albany Daily Advertiser.

There seems to be a kind of fatality that attaches itself to the underhanded doings of the clergy, in this as well as other parts of the world, and which,

sooner or later, fails not of exposing both the works of darkness and their wily authors, in their proper colours, to the open day. H. I.

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[From the American Eagle.]

Defeat of the Clergy in their attempts to establish a Law Religion.

The friends of the country, and particularly the friends of religious freedom, and foes of clerical usurpation, will be gratified to learn that the designing clergy of the State of New York have met with an entire defeat in their plot of imposing their *tracts* officially on the common schools in that State. The committee of the legislature appointed on the Lebanon, Madison county, petition, have reported that the superintendent of common schools has no authority, by law, officially to recommend them to their schools; nor to order the school celebrations which he did. Of course, all he has done, as an instrument in their hands, was a usurpation of power and authority. So that the ambitious clergy of that state are again all aback in these their snaky, underhanded designs on the school funds, and the tract instruction of youth in that state, for the present. At least they cannot, it seems, make an instrument of the secretary of state and superintendent of common schools to effect their ambitious purposes.

And will they now proclaim to Europe, and the friends of a hierarchy, their signal defeat, as they did their "signal success," when the superintendent issued his first order, conformable to their views?

Could the most sanguine friends of religious and civil liberty have expected a more signal and sudden triumph? Is it not that of the *shepherd boy* against the *Goliath* of the *Philistines*?

After this signal success of the few and feeble against the many and mighty, who shall despair of the *God of Jacob* still watching over the *Ark of the American Israel*?

RUSSIA.

*Extract of a Letter from Europe to the
Editor of the Christian Advocate.*

"In Russia, I lament to say, the good work [of circulating the Scriptures] is languishing, and apparently almost ready to expire. Henceforth no copies of the Scriptures are to be distributed in that vast empire, not even amongst the Tartars and Mahometans, but through the hands of the *clergy of the Greek church*: and the Persian translation, made at St. Petersburg, is suppressed. Papoff, the late valuable secretary of the Russian Bible Society, is under a criminal prosecution, for translating a book of Gossner's in which the perpetual virginity of Mary is combated—as are two others. The Emperor Alexander, it is said, is really shackled by the noblesse and the clergy of the Greek church; who feel that the flood of light which has been let in by the circulation of the Scriptures, may prejudice them. Prince Gallitzin, has been *obliged* to resign, as minister of religion, and to give way to others. Could not your periodicals do much good, by noticing what is going forward (particularly in Russia) frequently and powerfully, so as to excite public attention?"

[From a Paris Journal of March 21.]

The state of Europe is remarkable. A short time ago, a word from England shook it to its centre,—now it is alarmed by the silence of Russia. The *alliance* of crowned heads, which the revolution of Spain had cemented, seems to dissolve before those powerful opposing interests which follow subdued revolutions. The independence of Greece, the independence of the Brazils, the independence of all the world, is the subject of debate in the councils of kings, and may soon be contested on the field of battle. Different interests, and the different powers, seem, after a truce of ten years, preparing for a new contest. The universe is in labour—what will it bring forth? The

future will soon show. We have not hitherto endeavoured to pry into mysteries. It is enough to recollect that lord Liverpool lately said, peace will not be eternal. One thing is plain, that every state is fortifying its frontiers, or strengthening its institutions, to enable it to influence the decisions of fortune.

THE WAR IN BURMAH.

By the ship Beverly, Captain Whitney, in a quick passage from Calcutta, late intelligence has been received from Burmah. Capt. Whitney has brought Calcutta papers to the 1st of January last. By these it appears that a most bloody battle was fought at Rangoon on the first seven days of December. The official accounts of this battle represent, that the whole military force of the Burman Empire was engaged, amounting to about 60,000 men, well armed with numerous artillery, &c. Their chiefs seemed confident of success, and boasted of soon having it in their power to lead the British army captive in chains to grace the triumph of the Golden Monarch. The result proved the reverse,—for the British gained a signal victory, after an action of seven successive days, by land and water. The natives were dispersed, leaving most of their artillery, stores, &c. behind them in their flight.

From the nature of the marshy ground and thick brush, it was not possible to ascertain the loss of the natives, but at least 5000 are supposed to have been killed. Of 300 pieces ordnance of their army, 240 were left in possession of the British.

At the last accounts, the whole Burmese coast, from Rangoon to the eastward, was subject to the British arms.

[Columbian Star.]

[Communicated for the Reformer.]

BE FAITHFUL.

A minister, whose preaching was more close and practical than accorded with the taste of his hearers, and who

had in consequence been threatened with dismission, applied to the late Dr. Scott for advice, as to the course he should pursue. The Doctor returned the following answer:

"I have seen and heard of so many such things, that I am really grieved and discouraged respecting the Gospel. No sooner does a minister begin in good earnest to address the consciences of his hearers in an awakening, searching, and practical manner, and there is hope that religion will revive, converts be made, and Christians quickened to adorn their profession, than some antinomian hypocrite, or some injudicious professor, whose tongue or *purse* has given him considerable influence, begins to form a party against the minister; to censure, brow-beat, discourage, oppose, or expel him. Hence, some are restrained, and by the fear of man, 'which bringeth a snare,' their ardour is damped—they feel themselves in thralldom—and if they are not consciously unfaithful, they are forced to use such caution as cramps them in their ministrations, and takes off much of their pungency.—Others are turned out and reduced to great difficulty; but this is by far the best, as it throws them immediately into the care of the Lord, for whose sake they suffer, and who will certainly, in due time, provide for all who suffer for him. Thus a stupid congregation choose a pastor of their own cast, when a peculiarly alarming, heart searching one is requisite—and so matters grow worse and worse. Or, if the pastor they choose turns out different than they expected, they either spoil or expel him; and thus, in many places, the form and notion are all that is retained of true religion."

[From the *Religious Inquirer*.]

MORAL INDECISION.

"I know the right, and I approve it too, Detest the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

Preachers and writers on moral sub-

jects have found less difficulty in convincing the understanding than in melting the heart, for although a few tears might fall and a strong impression be felt at the time of hearing or reading, its influence has been short, and unproductive of the expected good. Many people listen to a song, which describes the joys of virtue or the misery of guilt in the most simple and affecting manner, till they deeply feel the horror or happiness which is portrayed, and go their way, and forget what manner of persons they are, or should be. Preaching, writing and conversation have the same effect on the heart, and fail in producing the intended change of life, as their impressions are effaced by passion, or the rapid occurrences of an engrossing world. Could persuasion touch the soul with such a mighty influence as would energize or overawe in solitude or society, strong hopes might be entertained of lasting benefit. But while the moral sense is so little affected, that the person is disposed to fight against his conviction of right, he will not turn from the error of his way into the path of virtue and happiness. Though he clearly perceives the goodness of your counsel and readily confesses the kindness of your motives, yet his conscience is not firmly engaged on the side of religion, and he goes out into the scenes of business, or vice, and wears his former character, or becomes more hardened in crime. Thus he verifies our motto in his conduct, and furnishes lamentable proof, that moral suasion is frequently ineffectual. Facts of this kind, which every day's remark presents to our alarmed vision, should excite us to the most unremitting watchfulness over our hearts, and to the most devoted exertions in favour of those, who are yet struggling between the solicitations of appetite and the solemn monitions of God. We should pray over their broken vows, their blighted hopes, their weeping families and the moral desolation of their hearts, in a manner the

most tender and penetrating, till their souls shall thrill with horror at the dreadfulness of their crimes against God, and the fearfulness of their exposure to near, to impending ruin. We should point out with clearness and emphasis, those who have passed their days and nights in deep and withering guilt, and who have carried the burning furnace of hell in their bosoms in the seasons of affected gaiety, but of real torment. In this way, should God bless our endeavours, we may rouse them from insensibility to their awful situation, and lead them from the terribleness of sin to the light, life, and joy of religion, to the smile, love, and enjoyment of God. Should our exertions fail of reclaiming them, we shall reap the approval of heaven, and experience greater attachment to holiness, and stronger abomination of sin. But every person who undertakes this glorious work, should first know the state of his own soul; lest, misapprehending his true condition, he should need the counsel he intended to give, and the reformation he designed to effect, and thereby expose the cause to disgrace, and induce the abandoned to say, Physician, heal thyself. It should be distinctly remembered, that reproving others does not sweeten our temper, or render our moral perception more clear, unless we enter on this sacred employment in the right spirit, and persevere with enlightened zeal. For we are extremely apt to deceive ourselves on this point, and to fancy our transgressions are bleached into spotless virtue by the severity we display in reprehending the faults and censuring the bitterness of those around us. Against this propensity to conceal our hearts from our own inspection, by inveighing against the sin of others, we should most scrupulously guard, as it is an unsuspected, though a most certain road to perdition. For when we are conscious of our own turpitude, and yet are resolved to upbraid others, that we may avoid the sting of a guilty

heart, it is evident we prefer temporary relief, and the semblance of a pure character, to radical and unfeigned repentance. In this case, we detest the wrong in others which we practise, and neither do right, nor encourage the wavering to choose the path of truth and holiness.

When people condemn that which they are constantly doing, without possessing sufficient strength of moral principle to adopt the course of action which they approve, their condition is most deplorable, as they are continually goaded by self-condemnation, and yet disinclined, either by the feebleness of purpose or the strong power of habit, from choosing the way that God, reason and conscience designate. Such persons may fancy time will bring the desired change, and that as they advance in life they shall increase in wisdom and purity; but each day will urge the example of the past, and they may resolve, and re-resolve, and die the same. The importance of commencing the work of reformation to-day is hence strikingly obvious, and it should be undertaken with a firmness of purpose which no scorn can weaken, no habits enfeeble, no difficulties overcome. For a sneering world, a depraved heart and numerous impediments to a thorough reformation of life will plead for indecision and delay with complete success, if a resolution be not formed, which, with the blessing of God, will gain strength by opposition, and finally triumph over all obstacles. Unless people will come to this determination, they have the awful prospect of spending the residue of their years in a struggle between reason and vitiated appetite, and of knowing they are daily becoming more complete vassals of evil habits, and that they are constantly sinking deeper in the gulf of perdition. If this be the unavoidable consequence of irresolution, can any one repeat our motto, or reflect on the sentiment it contains, without applying its teaching to his

own heart, or asking, shall I continue to grow worse and worse till I mingle with the dust of the urn, and is the happiest portion of my life gone? Lest habit, reproach, and the disinclination of a heart fond of repose bring us to this melancholy conclusion, let us pour out our souls in prayer to God for assistance in the great and glorious enterprise of reformation, and concentrate our every power to accomplish a work which shall rejoice our hearts and conform us to God. Should we not thus resolve, the blackness of darkness will constitute the brightness and beauty of our future prospect; but should we determine, with the blessing of heaven, to amend our ways, and to cherish a better spirit, our moral and intellectual elevation will constantly increase, and the smile of an approving God impart the emblem and earnest of the immortal paradise.

ANNIVERSARIES.

During the last month, anniversaries of some of the most distinguished charitable societies (so called) in this country, were celebrated at New York. Among these was that of the *Sunday School Union Society*. On this occasion, we learn that 5, or 6000 children, of both sexes, assembled in the Park, and then marched in a grand procession to Castle Garden, on the Battery, arranged in companies, bearing banners, with mottoes, &c. The multitude of spectators, it is said, was immense, amounting to no less than 15 or 20,000; being nearly double the number convened at the place on any former occasion—except the landing of La Fayette. "One hundred and fifty clergymen," says the *Columbian Star*, "were counted."

Now, we would ask, What benefit can arise to the children, or to the cause of christianity, from all this display and parade? Such proceedings do not seem calculated to advance the interests of that humble and unostentatious religion which the conductors of these schools professedly are attempting to promote. To take an active part, indeed, in such anti-christian practices, is virtually to renounce the religion of the New Testament, and follow the maxims and ways of a vain world.

May 12th was celebrated at the City Hotel, New York, the Ninth Anniversary

of the American Bible Society. Says the account, "Governor Clinton presided at the meeting, supported by Mr. Justice Thompson and Col. Varick. The Clergy present were numerous. The Governor opened the business of the day in an address which is affirmed to have been very able and impressive."

On the same day was held the anniversary meeting of the *Presbyterian Education Society*, when the chair was again filled by Governor Clinton as President. "Long and able reports," says the *National Gazette*, "were read, and copious harangues pronounced." Governor Clinton is certainly in a fair way to become President of the United States, should the clergy prove to be the strongest party in the country.

In addition, was held on the same day the first meeting of the "*National Tract Society*," and the corner-stone of its grand edifice also laid. We were not a little surprised, after what has been set forth by the Methodists against the National Tract Society, to find Mr. Summerfield figuring away on this occasion with great speeches in its favour. Indeed this popular preacher, having been countenanced and caressed by the Presbyterians, appears to have sold himself to them for a tool, or rather a stool-pigeon to decoy other Methodists into the snare designed to entrap them for the benefit of the Presbyterian clergy.

RELIGIOUS RULERS.

"The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."

Priest Willson of the "*Evangelical Witness*," a Presbyterian and warm advocate for the union of Church and State, in commenting on the above words, remarks:

"Such is the destitution of godliness among those whom you see occupying the seats of power, from the village magistrate up to the presidential chair, that you would think it almost ridiculous to talk of a president of the United States calling his family around him morning and evening, to sing the praises of God, read his word, and invoke his name in prayer. Yet this is a small part of what is demanded in the purest parts of the church, as satisfactory evidence of the fear of the Lord. * * * * It is said, in religious circles, and by men who have some opportunities of knowing the truth, that General Jackson, last winter, retired from the presidential levees, at an early hour, to attend to family prayers with his household. O Lord, hasten the time when the

fearers of thy name, able men, and men 'hating covetousness, shall be exalted;' and 'kings become nursing fathers to Zion, and queens, nursing mothers.'—Amen, amen."

Minister Willson, with all his great zeal in religion, holds it to be lawful for christians to go to war, and to make use of the bayonet. We have never been able to reconcile such a religion with the religion inculcated in the New Testament. And should we come to have *kings* and *queens* in this country, if they were such as the Editor of the *Evangelical Witness* would appoint, they would undoubtedly be just such *nursing fathers and mothers to Zion* as the pious rulers at Boston, who imprisoned, whipped, and hung others who differed from them in religious opinions. Would the Editor of the *Witness* be willing to have a king reign over us who was a Methodist, Baptist, or of any other persuasion except his own?

[From the Cincinnati Republican, April 1.]

"Gen. JACKSON arrived in this city early on Sunday last. He attended divine service at the First Presbyterian Church in the morning and afternoon; after which, and on the succeeding days, he was very generally waited on by the citizens, who paid their respects to him and Mrs. Jackson at the Hotel. Monday evening Gen. Jackson attended the theatre, where a box was handsomely ornamented for his reception. On his entrance, he was greeted with three hearty cheers, from a numerous audience.

"On Wednesday, at 10 o'clock, Gen. Jackson attended the Philomathic exhibition at the First Presbyterian Church, where several orations were delivered by young gentlemen of that Society."

Navigation of the Erie Canal on the Sabbath.—The committee to whom were referred the several petitions relative to closing the canal locks on the Sabbath, have reported against them. Among other reasons for their report, they allege that it would be oppressive on a certain portion of the citizens, and that it would not have the effect designed, inasmuch as there would be a collection of boatmen at each of the locks, spending the day in idleness and dissipation.

The "*Western Recorder*," published under the patronage, and for the benefit of the Auburn Theological Seminary, remarks on the above report as follows:

"These are wonderfully fine arguments, and show a vast deal of research!! Pre-

cisely the same reasoning might be held respecting all the laws that relate to the Sabbath: for who would expect that those who need the restraint of the laws on this subject, would all take it into their heads at once to attend meeting. The whole in our view is a mere farce."

The manner of getting up those petitions and of obtaining signatures to them, appears to have been as great a farce as any thing connected with the business.—Outwardly there was a great show of zeal for God and his laws, while the main object of the clergy was to obtain the aid of the civil power as a preparatory step to the union of Church and State. True christian zeal had nothing to do in originating such petitions. Christ's kingdom not being of this world, those belonging to it will never have recourse to worldly rulers to enforce its requirements.

A correspondent who sent us a paper containing the report, remarks—"Thank heaven! New York is not yet entirely under the pernicious influence of the black coats."

We have learned from a source on which we can depend, that a certain "Divine" near Fredericktown, (Md.) is much interested to prevent the circulation of the Reformer, particularly among his own people, calling it an infidel publication, &c. and threatening, in case further exertions should be made to extend its circulation in those parts, to denounce it from the pulpit. We are under no apprehension of any injury from such denunciations—but as we are in possession of the name of the individual, if he should continue his unwarranted charges we shall deem it proper to bring his name before the public, and notice his proceedings in a more particular manner. It would be the better way for our enemies and opposers to write to some of the numerous Doctors of Divinity in this city, and learn from them, under their hand and seal, whether the editor or the publication can be made out to be of the infidel stamp, and then to publish the result of their inquiries, instead of venting their spleen in false charges, and letting their prejudices overcome their prudence.

* * "Eudokia" in our next number.

The Reformer is printed on the first of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed and payment made, to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. Numbers can be supplied from the commencement of the work.